311 water. This section describes the methods of securing the principal raw materials—berries, birch, water, wood, grass, fish, fur, and garden produce.

312 Collecting. Berries, roots, spruce bark, spruce gum, and eggs are collected. In summer
321 the tops of the wild onion plant may be pulled for use in soup, and a parsnip-like root is sometimes dug. Most berry picking occurs in late summer, but girls they will pick a few high bush cranberries while visiting the cabin lines in early winter. When women and
[431] girls return to camp with berries, they may offer a share to women who did not participate in the picking. Men will often stop while traveling to pick from an abundant supply of blueberries or low bush cranberries.

Moss is pulled from the ground and piled in a small piece of canvas which is folded together for transportation. In winter the women scrape away the snow with bare hands or snowshoes and use an ax to chop out a frozen mass of moss. After the moss is dried out it is used to pad children's diaper cloths. When used as chink, big rolling, moss is not dried. Spruce bark for use as a camp floor is cut by the women. A number of small trees may be dragged into camp and then removed. More rarely, a little bark is obtained by cutting
[314] away the lower branches of a standing tree. Spruce gum is pocked off a red spruce tree in the course of scrubbing and charred immediately. In June or July a woman occasionally finds the eggs of spruce hens or willow grouse. The eggs are gently shaken or tapped to ascertain if there is a young bird inside; should this be the case, they are said to be returned to the nest.

● 312 Water is obtained from rivers, streams, and lakes in one or two spots around cooking vessels by the women. In winter the ice of the river is chopped through and this must be done several times a day or else the hole will soon freeze over again. Snow may be melted to secure water. Stagnant muddy water is avoided whenever a better source of running water is not too far distant.

313 Collecting wood for fuel is time consuming in the winter season. An open camp fire in
[342] summer or fall requires relatively little effort on the ax fuel gathering is concerned. Most families were all twilight to gather a large enough supply of poles to keep the fire going until bedtime. In winter, gathering fuel for an open fire is more laborious, since enough wood has to be collected to provide heat till morning. Except for certain spruce wood used in smoking holes, it is ideally the man's task to bring wood into camp. In practice, however, women and girls assist. Keeping a stove going in winter requires so much fuel that it is not possible to rely on the supply of dead wood lying around a settlement. Therefore, in order to insure an adequate winter wood supply for a settlement, sufficient trees must be dried two or more years in advance. Two methods are used for drying trees, burning and girdling. In the former procedure, small trees of timber are fired where the wood is right. The fire kills the tree and in a year or so the wood is dry enough for fuel. More often red spruce trees, from six to twenty inches in diameter, are girdled. This process will dry a tree in about two years. Jackpine is sometimes dried by felling a number of trees, chopping off the limbs, and then stacking the poles upright against a clump of willows to dry. In about three years this wood will be thoroughly dry, although half-dry jackpine is used in open fires and green jackpine is burned in lanterns. A sufficient amount of wood is rarely cut to last more than a short time. Each spring there is usually a severe shortage of wood, and any deadwood lying around the settlement, including discarded artifacts, is utilized for heat.